

## literary world

### Book tells about demise of villages on Columbia

**TRACKING DOWN OREGON**, by Ralph Friedman, photographs by Phoebe Friedman (The Caxton Printers, Caldwell, Idaho, paperback, 306 pages, \$5.95).

Portland writer Ralph Friedman is an avid student of history, and in this new book he uses geographical pegs to start his discussions of the past.

For example, he tells about a successful search for the only surviving home in which suffragette Abigail Scott Duniway lived, at Lafayette, Ore., then launches into an interesting account of Duniway's life as a writer and booster of voting rights for women.

And, among numerous other places, Friedman tells about the tiny community of Latourell, at the north end of Talbot State Park, just off the Columbia River Scenic Highway. This was named for Joseph "Frenchy" Latourell, who came around Cape Horn on a whaling ship

and eventually "put down roots at Rooster Rock," Friedman says.

But the main story Friedman relates in this chapter, "The Romance Back of Latourell," concerns Latourell's father-in-law and mother-in-law, Richard and Betsey Ough, early residents at Washougal.

Mrs. Ough was the daughter of an Indian chief named Schlyhoush, who lived at Washougal. She was known among the Indians as White Wing and was born in 1805, the year Lewis and Clark came down the Columbia River.

The first time she saw Ough, she recalled in an interview when she was 105 years old, was when she and her father were on the river catching salmon and met some white men including John McLoughlin, the head of Fort Vancouver, and her future husband.

About a month later Ough turned up at the village at Washougal and began lobbying with the chief to get White Wing as his wife. Eventually his request was approved, and he and White Wing (Betsey) made their first home in a small log house at Fort Vancouver.

As Betsey recalled it many years later, McLoughlin prophesied:

"Some day, all the beaver gone, no more elk, nothing for people to eat. You go take land, make house, raise cattle. By and by, lots of people come here, all hungry, nothing to eat."

The Oughs returned to the Washougal and settled, and led many destitute settlers who came down the Columbia River headed toward Fort Vancouver and the Willamette Valley.

Many of the places mentioned in Friedman's book are fairly near.

Among Friedman favorites are some of the river front villages of the lower Columbia — deserted or nearly deserted burghs.

"I remember the Columbia when, from Astoria to St. Helens, the river was dotted with small, picturesque fishing and lumbering towns, ferries and earthy main streets that pressed hard against the shore. Even before I arrived some settlements of yore had all but disappeared: Blind Slough, Quinn, Pyramid, Rinearson, Reuben, Hunters and Marshland.

"And others had moved uphill from the stream, leaving nothing behind but memories quickly forgotten.

"Some of the villages I saw are virtually dead now. It doesn't seem logical, and it's hard to believe, but the Lower Columbia is a river of ghost towns, especially if

you count those settlements that are reduced to Grange hall communities.

"There are virile cities, of course, and everyone traveling U.S. 30 sees these, but few know of the ghosts away from the highway."

Friedman's book is well written and is accompanied by numerous illustrations. Reproduction is excellent, as usual with the Caxton books.

By TED VAN ARSDOL, Columbian Staff Writer



Ralph Friedman

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